



MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

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Legislative Fiscal Analyst
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DATE: November 21, 2007

TO: Management Advisory Group

FROM: Pamela Joehler, Senior Fiscal Analyst

RE: Staff Services Project Update

This memo is intended to update the Management Advisory Group of the status of the Staff Services Project currently being undertaken by staff.

As a reminder of what this project is intended to accomplish, I have attached a copy of the final project workplan and have briefly summarized the project in the following section.

What is the purpose of this project, what are we trying to accomplish?

The goal of the project is to develop and implement recommendations for improving the array of LFD products and services in order to provide the most useful information necessary for legislators in the budget and appropriations decision-making process.

The project is intended to answer three primary questions:

1. What is the current range of products and services provided by the LFD, and which of these are mission-critical?
2. Are the current LFD products and services meeting the needs of the legislature, or are there areas that need improvement?
3. Are there areas of expertise needed by the legislature that are not currently being met?

How are we going to accomplish this goal?

We have divided the project into three tracks, noted below:

1. Evaluate adequacy and allocation of staff resources

Information gathered from this portion of the project will be provided to LFD management for evaluation and potential follow up with the Management Advisory Committee.

Staff resources evaluation will be accomplished via a written survey to LFD staff and a telephone survey to LFC, Appropriations, and Senate Finance members.

2. Evaluate the priority of current LFD products and services and/or need for new products and services, in relation to agency mission

LFD product evaluation will be accomplished via three staff work sessions, scheduled in December, January, and February. The first session will focus on updating the agency mission, goals, and objectives. The second session will examine the mission ranking and audience ranking of the information contained in Volume 1 of the Budget Analysis and the Fiscal Report. The third session will review Volumes 2-4 of the Budget Analysis and Fiscal Report, as well as other LFD products.

Project staff anticipates there will be numerous suggestions for improving the content and accessibility of our primary publications. Results of these work sessions will be reviewed with LFD management and any recommendations for significant changes will be brought to the Management Advisory Committee for review and discussion.

3. Evaluate usefulness and appropriateness of LFD internal systems tools

This evaluation will be accomplished via a staff survey and will examine several systems used by the LFD as well as the statewide budget system.

How long will this project take?

The project is scheduled to be completed by the March 2008 LFC meeting. The project's major milestones are:

1. Late November 2007 - Review responses to staff survey on staff resources and compile responses into report to LFD management (completed 11/21/07)
2. Mid January 2008 – Review responses to staff survey on internal systems tools and compile responses into report to LFD management
3. Early February 2008 – Complete three work sessions with LFD staff intended to evaluate the priority of current LFD products and services and/or need for new products and services, in relation to agency mission. Provide written summary of findings and recommendations to LFD management and Management Advisory Group (if significant).
4. Mid February 2008 – Complete legislator telephone survey intended to garner legislator feedback on current LFD products and services and/or the need for new products and services. Compile responses into report to LFD management.
5. March 2008 – Final report to Legislative Finance Committee containing study findings and recommendations.